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PART I

IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT ORDERS

CHIEF SECRETARIAT

Abolition of Hulbanni Fees.

ORDER No. R. 3742-55—L. R. 331-40-4, DATED BANGALORE, THE 26TH NOVEMBER 1940.

The question of abolishing the system of sale of the right of grazing on all unoccupied lands of Government has been pressed on Government for sometime past. Assessed waste lands in villages and miscellaneous kharab lands, such as unassessed waste tank beds, road margins, etc., form a substantial addition to gomal lands in providing pasturage for village cattle. Grazing on these lands was allowed free until the year 1865-66 when the practice of sanctioning the pasturage annually was introduced in all surveyed taluks. This system having led to complaints on the ground that speculators and outsiders were enabled to outbid the local villagers whose interests were thereby prejudiced, a change of system was introduced in 1884 whereby the inhabitants of each village were allowed the option of purchasing the hulbanni for a fixed lumpsum payment equivalent to the average revenue derived during the previous three years, and the right of pasture was auctioned only if the villagers declined to avail themselves of this privilege. The lumpsum fixed on the village was divided among the several raiyats in proportion to the number of cattle owned by them. As this arrangement was found to be defective in that it permitted overgrazing and reckless use of pastures by a section of the raiyat population, a revised procedure was sanctioned in 1924 and Government directed that the management of all lands sold for grazing under the hulbanni system be given over to Village Committees or Panchayets who were willing to come forward to regulate the grazing in them and to undertake to improve them. The transfer of such rights was subject to the condition that an amount calculated at the rate of two annas per acre of assessed and at one anna per acre of unassessed waste land should

be levied and that half of the revenue so realised would be assigned by Government to the village local bodies or Panchayets who would be expected to utilise the funds towards the improvement of the grazing lands, their conservation, watch, etc. In villages in which no local committee as indicated above was prepared to come forward, the right of grazing thereon had to be sold in auction, the purchaser of the grazing right being at liberty to sublet the grazing under any terms agreed upon between himself and the owners of cattle in the village. Practically no village community has come forward to manage these lands with the result that the grazing rights have mostly been disposed of in auction annually.

2. The raiyats have been contending that owing to the lease system there is speculation and hardship on the poorer raiyats and for several years past, representations have been made at almost every session of the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council that the villagers are put to considerable hardship by the present arrangement of the sale of Hulbanni and that the Hulbanni fees should be abolished. The main difficulties alluded to are that—

in factious villages, the lessee harasses persons belonging to other parties and prevents their cattle from grazing on the Hulbanni lands, that the sale purchasers levy fees from others indiscriminately and arbitrarily, and largely, in excess of the annual lease amount, and that where patels and shanbhogs happen to be the purchasers, they collect a grazing fee at two annas per rupee of assessment.

The question of abolition of Hulbanni fees was discussed in connection with a resolution moved in the Representative Assembly on the 18th October 1940, during the Dasara Session, and the members brought to notice once again, the serious difficulties under which people in the rural parts were suffering under the present system and the entire Assembly resolved that the Hulbanni fees should be abolished.

3. The question of fixing in the Harajpatti itself the maximum rates which the sale purchasers could be permitted to levy was considered by Government but it had to be dropped as it was beset with considerable difficulties. The possibilities of transferring the entire revenue derived from the Hulbanni to the Village Panchayets and entrusting them with its assessment and collection was also considered, but this too, it was felt, would not give much relief to the villagers.

4. The average revenue realised from this source has been about Rs. 70,000 per year and although the amount is large, Government consider that, having regard to the abuses inseparable from a system of farming grazing revenue and the widespread satisfaction that its discontinuance is calculated to give to people in rural parts, it is expedient to comply with the unanimous and oft-voiced request made in the two legislative bodies in the matter and accordingly direct that the levy of Hulbanni fees be abolished from the current year.

B. T. KESAVIENGAR,
Chief Secretary to Government.

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Administration Report of the Muzrai Department for the year 1939-40.

READ—

Letter No. C. Per. 'A-2—40-41, dated 4th October 1940, from the Muzrai Commissioner in Mysore, forwarding the Report on the Administration of the Muzrai Department for the year 1939-40.

ORDER No. 1077-91—MUZ. 144-40-8, DATED BANGALORE, THE 19TH NOVEMBER 1940.

Recorded.

2. *Rukn-ul-Mulk* Mr. S. Abdul Wajid, B.A., continued as Muzrai Commissioner during the year.

3. *Investigation of Cases of Defunct Institutions.*—There were 98 cases pending at the beginning of the year and 27 cases were detected during the year. Out of